

3 March 2022

Dear Whiddon Walgett residents and families,

Firstly, I would like to thank everyone who was able to attend yesterday's meeting. Due to the severe weather events we have experienced, it is with great regret that our Deputy CEO, Alyson Jarrett, and myself, could not be there in person to host this meeting.

For those who were unable to attend, Alyson and I did have the opportunity to meet with residents, families, Sally Renshaw (Whiddon's Regional General Manager- Residential West) and the Walgett team, via Zoom, to provide an update on our services at Walgett. This letter provides a summary of the update provided at the meeting.

You may recall that I wrote to residents, families and the Walgett community last year, in regards to the decline in demand for our aged care services in Walgett, that we have seen in recent years. In doing so, we asked for support from the community, and a better understanding of the aged care services needs in the local community.

As you may know, for many years, Whiddon has heavily subsidised Whiddon Walgett, which is now costing Whiddon around a quarter of a million dollars annually, for us to keep the doors open. For a significant time now, we have experienced a decline in admissions to Whiddon Walgett, which is further compounded by the presence of a Multi-Purpose Service (MPS) in the area.

Despite our very best efforts and commitment to finding ways to continue to offer our services to the local community, the decline for our services remains. This means that after a decade of providing care to the Walgett community, it was with very heavy hearts, that we have made the incredibly difficult decision to close the doors to Whiddon Walgett.

We understand that this is very difficult news to digest. Our priority now is to do everything that we can to support our residents, families and employees at this challenging time. We want to reassure you that we will take all steps possible to assist and support you wherever we can, and will be speaking with everyone individually to achieve this. We also want you to know that there are pathways for you to provide feedback or raise a concern. These include:

- **Whiddon:** haveyoursay@whiddon.com.au or Executive Administration, 81 Belmont Road, Glenfield, NSW 2167, T 02 9827 6683
- **Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN):** OPAN is a national network that supports older people and their representatives to address issues related to Commonwealth funded aged care services. T 1800 700 600
- **Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission:** A free and confidential service for anyone to raise a complaint about Australian Government subsidised aged care. T 1800 951 822

Please know that Whiddon Walgett will always hold a very special place in our hearts at Whiddon. As such, we think it is fitting that the property and building remain a valuable community asset and we are currently in discussions to try and bring this wish to fruition. It truly has been our privilege to be part of your life, and your community and we are incredibly proud of the tremendous team at Whiddon Walgett.

If you would like to discuss the contents of this letter, or the meeting, please contact Sally Renshaw on 0436 659 935.

In closing, we cannot thank you enough for the love, support and understanding you have shown us. We do hope that we can continue to provide support to your community in some way in the future.

Sincerely,



Chris Mamarelis
Whiddon CEO